

Learn To Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ With Power Panther

Background Information for Presenters



Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ is about making America's children healthier. It's about practical suggestions that will help you motivate children and their caregivers to eat healthy and be active. The Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Campaign messages and materials are fun for children and informative for caregivers. To make your job easier, this ready-to-use script contains messages based on the Food and Nutrition Service's cross-program Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ campaign. With the assistance of a "helper", Power Panther comes alive during your local and school events.

Target audience: Families – parents/caregivers and 8-10 year old tweens

Examples of events: Community events, farmer's markets, Food Stamp Program nutrition education events, etc.

Materials Needed

- Music player (e.g., stereo or boom box)
- Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ songs:
 - Power Panther is Here
 - If You Wanna Be Like the Power Panther
- Piece of fruit or bowl of fruit (so it can be seen by large audience)
- Slurp Poster

Power Panther "moves" may also be integrated into your program. The following moves are included in the script below to reinforce campaign messages.

- Healthy eating:
 - holds a piece of fruit up in one hand and makes a thumbs-up gesture with the other
 - distributes healthy snacks (optional)
- Physical activity:
 - dances or moves to music
 - tosses a ball
 - does calisthenics
 - strength/power - makes a muscle or holds fists and lifts arms overhead
- Other moves:
 - waves hello
 - shakes hands with helper and audience
 - nods in agreement
 - gestures to audience e.g. thumbs-up

Script:

Background music: "Power Panther is Here" or other Power Panther song.

Introducing Power Panther

Helper: *While walking around at an event or during a presentation, greet people with: “Do you know (or remember) Power Panther?” or “I’d like you to meet a special friend of mine –Power Panther!”*

Power Panther: Waves hello, and shake hands with the helper and audience.

Helper: “Power Panther has traveled over 500,000 miles across the country over the years to meet caregivers and kids like you and to talk about eating healthy and being physically active. Let’s welcome Power Panther with a big “Hello, Power Panther!”

Eat Smart. Play Hard – and being Powerful

Power Panther: Walks to center of the stage, room/area, and points to his Eat Smart. Play Hard T-shirt, and makes a bicep flex with a fisted power glove to suggest power/strength.

Helper: “Power Panther has a message he wants to share with you: Eat Smart. Play Hard. Do you know what that means? *(Waits for audience responses)* “It means eating healthy meals and snacks, and making sure you’re physically active on a regular basis. “Why is eating smart for kids important?” *(Waits for audience responses)* “Eating smart or healthy is good for your health, since it will give you energy, and help you learn in school.

Power Panther: Gives a “thumbs up” to the helper and nods yes.

Helper: Power Panther says adults should also eat smart. It will help them to lower their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other diseases, and help them control weight. And if parents eat healthy and show their kids that it’s good for them, their kids will want to eat healthy too”.

Power Panther: Gives a “thumbs up” to the helper and nods yes.

Power Panther says it’s really important to combine your day with healthy food and play so you can have the energy and strength to be your very best. Power Panther says you have the power within yourself to make healthy choices every day. And parents can help their kids to make healthy choices too - like Power Panther does with his nephew Slurp who lives with him. (Power Panther holds up a poster of Slurp and holds his fist to his chest to communicate his love for Slurp.) If you eat smart and play hard, you can be as powerful as Power Panther.”

Helper: “Do you know what the pyramid on Power Panther’s T-shirt means?” (Power Panther turns around to show MyPyramid) *(Helper waits for audience responses)* “It shows us how to eat healthy, in the right amounts from all the food groups.”

Power Panther: Pulls out an apple from his bag, holds it up with one hand and gives the thumbs up with the other.

Helper: “Power Panther wants to ask you about breakfast. Do you know why breakfast is important?” *(Waits for audience responses)* “Eating breakfast will not only make you feel good and powerful, it will give you energy, and help you be more alert so you’ll do better in school or work.

Power Panther: Pulls out a banana or box of (generic) cereal from his bag and holds it up to the audience.

Helper: Power Panther thinks it's important for families to eat breakfast together. In fact, every morning, he has a healthy breakfast like cereal, fruit, and low-fat milk with his nephew, Slurp.

Physical Activity

Helper: "Why is physical activity important?" (*Waits for audience responses*). "Being physically active is good for your health, builds strong bones and muscles, and helps you feel more energetic and strong." It will also help adults to lower their risk for diseases and it will help control weight." Power Panther says that fun physical activities can be part of family time. Power Panther and Slurp play basketball together or go on walks around the neighborhood most days of the week.

Power Panther: Pretends to shoot a basket.

Helper: "Who can name some other great exercise activities you could do every day? (Helper reinforces audience responses and adds to them, e.g.: bike riding, all sports, walking, active games like dodge ball, running, hiking, working out.)

Helper: "Power Panther says we should move more and sit less. Let's join Power Panther in a few easy moves." [Do simple guided calisthenics such as touching toes, stretching arms in air, side bends, etc.]

More about Power Panther

Power Panther: gestures, pointing to himself.

Helper: "Power Panther wants me to tell you about him. His favorite activities are walking, running, and biking. He's also very fast and powerful, can jump as high as a tractor-trailer and can climb trees when he needs to. He'll share a secret with you – he keeps his energy level up by starting the day with a healthy breakfast. He also keeps fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk or yogurt, and whole wheat crackers handy because they make great snacks."

Power Panther: Nods in agreement and pats his stomach and gives the thumbs up gesture.

Helper: "Do you want to know more about Power Panther?" (*Waits for audience responses*.) "He likes doing activities with friends and he always shares his snacks with them. Would you like to play/dance/eat with him today?" [This is a cue for a planned Power Panther activity such as more simple calisthenics, or distribution of healthy snacks.]

Resume music: Power Panther leads audience in calisthenics or distributing healthy snacks.